

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 15275 281725Z

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05

H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 FEA-01 ACDA-12 IO-13 EB-08

NRC-05 OES-07 ERDA-05 DHA-05 TRSE-00 OMB-01 /136 W

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R 281307Z OCT 77

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6986

INFO AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

USLO PEKING

CINCPAC HONOLULU

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: IN UR

SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER COMMENTS ON MOSCOW VISIT

SUMMARY: AT PRESS CONFERENCE OCTOBER 17 PRIME MINISTER DESAI SAID THAT THE SIGNIFICANT RESULT OF HISTRIIP WAS A CLOSER AND BETTER UNDERSTANDING ON BOTH SIDES. IN THE CONTEXT OF THE TALKS, HE ALSO COMMENTED ON THE INDIAN OCEAN, THE NPT, THE NUCLEAR FUEL PROGRAM, HUMAN RIGHTS, AND CHINA. DOMESTIC POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC QUESTIONS, HOWEVER, DOMINATED THE PRESS CONFERENCE AND THE SUBSEQUENT HEADLINES. END SUMMARY.

1. AT PRESS CONFERENCE OCTOBER 27 FOLLOWING HIS RETURN FROM
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PAGE 02 NEW DE 15275 281725Z

MOSCOW, PRIME MINISTER DESAI SAID THAT THE MOST SIGNIFICANT OUTCOME OF HIS VISIT WAS A "PROPER UNDERSTANDING OF EACH OTHER ON BOTH SIDES; A CLOSER AND BETTER UNDERSTANDING". ASKED IF HE HAD NOT AGREED IN MOSCOW, CONTRARY TO PAST JANATA POSITION, TO STRENGTHEN THE INDO-SOVIET TREATY OF 1971, DESAI RESPONDED THAT IT WAS NOT A QUESTION OF STRENGTHENING THE TREATY BUT ONE OF STRENGTHENING THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE USSR AND INDIA.

THERE IS NO QUESTION OF "ANY SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH ANY COUNTRY", HE ADDED, AND "NO RELATIONS WITH ANY COUNTRY AT THE COST OF ANY OTHER". THERE IS A "COMPLETE IDENTITY OF VIEWS" ON THIS MATTER WITH THE USSR.

2. DESAI SAID THAT WHAT INTERESTED HIM MOST ABOUT HIS TRIP WAS THAT THE STANDARD OF THE SOVIET PEOPLE HAS RISEN VERY HIGH SINCE HE LAST VISITED THERE 17 YEARS AGO. ASKED IF THIS IMPROVEMENT RESULTED FROM THE SOVIET POLITICAL SYSTEM, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID IT IS A QUESTION OF THEIR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.
3. ON SPECIAL ISSUES RAISED DURING THE TALKS, THE PRIME MINISTER HAD THE FOLLOWING TO SAY, ACCORDING TO THE OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT.

--A. INDIAN OCEAN: THE US-SOVIET TALKS ARE PROCEEDING ON A HOPEFUL LINE AND DESAI THOUGHT THAT IN A SHORT PERIOD OF TIME, THEY WILL COME TO A CONCLUSION AND THERE WILL BE "NO INFLUENCE LEFT IN THE INDIAN OCEAN GRADUALLY". HE LATER ADDED THAT "BOTH THE USA AND THE USSR ARE AGREED ON SEEING THAT THERE IS NO INCREASE IN THOSE BASES OR IN THE STRENGTH WHICH IS THERE. THIS IS THE FIRST AGREEMENT. THEN, AFTERWARDS, THEY ARE GOING TO LESSEN IT EVERY YEAR SO THAT IT DISAPPEARS. SO, THERE IS NOTHING REQUIRED TO BE DISCUSSED FURTHER".

--B. NPT: ASKED IF THERE WAS ANY DIFFERENCE BETWEEN US AND SOVIET VIEWS REGARDING NUCLEAR POLICY TOWARD INDIA, DESAI SAID THAT " "BETWEEN THEM, THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE. AS FAR AS WE ARE CONCERNED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 NEW DE 15275 281725Z

ALSO, THEY HAVE THE SAME VIEW". THE PM ADDED THAT HE TOLD BOTH THAT INDIA WOULD NOT SIGN THE NPT AS LONG AS IT WAS DISCRIMINATORY.

--C. INFCE: TO A CONVOLUTED QUESTION WHICH IMPLIED DOUBTS ABOUT GOVT ASSURANCES THAT THE NUCLEAR FUEL CYCLE VALUATION WOULD NOT BE BINDING ON INDIA, THE PM REPLIED ACERBICALLY THAT IT WAS NOT NECESSARY TO "GO ON REPEATING THE ASSURANCE EVERY DAY".

--D. HUMAN RIGHTS: ASKED IF HUMAN RIGHTS, A "SUBJECT OF COMMON INTEREST" TO DESI AND PRESIDENT CARTER, HAD BEEN DISCUSSED IN THE TALKS, THE PM REPLIED: "WE DID NOT DISCUSS ANYTHING LIKE THAT IN MOSCOW. I AM NOT MR. JIMMY CARTER. SHOULD I DISCUSS EVERYTHING WHICH HE DISCUSSES?"

--E. CHINA: ASKED IF CHINA HAD FIGURED IN THE DISCUSSIONS, DESAI SAID THAT THE TALKS WILL HAVE TO BE BETWEEN CHINA AND INDIA AND CHINA "HAS NOT MOVED IN THE MATTER YET THOUGH INDIRECTLY WE HEAR THEY ARE MOVING". DESAI ADDED THAT INDIA WAS NOT IN ANY WAY SPOILING THE RELATIONS.

--F. INDO-SOVIET ISSUES: DESAI SAID THAT THE RUPEE-RUBLE

AGREEMENT HAD NOT BEEN DISCUSSED, NOR HAD HE GONE TO MOSCOW TO
"MAKE ANY TRANSACTIONS" ABOUT OBTAINING A MODERNIZED VERSION OF
THE MIG. WHATEVER IS TO BE "PROCESSED" WOULD BE DONE THROUGH
EXPERTS AND THE INDO-SOVIET COMMISSION.

4. THE HOUR-LONG PRESS CONFERENCE WAS DOMINATED BY DOMESTIC
POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC ISSUES, AND THE MOSCOW VISIT LOST OUT
IN MOST OF THE HEADLINES TO THE PRIME MINISTER'S COMMENTS ON MRS.
GANDHI. EDITORIAL REACTION TO THE TRIP HAS BEEN FAVORABLE AND
HAS HIGHLIGHTED THE "FENCE-MENDING" ASPECTS OF THE TRIP AND THE
DURABILITY OF THE TRADITIONAL BILATERAL TIES. AFTER WE HAVE HAD
OPPORTUNITY TO TALK WITH MEA OFFICIALS NEXT WEEK, WE WILL PROVIDE
ANALYSIS OF THE TRIP.

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Message Attributes

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Subject: PRIME MINISTER COMMENTS ON MOSCOW VISIT SUMMARY: AT PRESS CONFERENCE OCTOBER 17 PRIME MINISTER DESAI SAID THAT THE SIGNIFICANT RESULT OF HISTRIIP
TAGS: OVIP, SOPN, IN, UR, (DESAI, MORARJI)
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